

United States Government

Department of Energy

Bonneville Power Administration

memorandum

DATE: August 9, 2004

REPLY TO
ATTN OF: KEC-4

SUBJECT: Supplement Analysis for the Watershed Management Program EIS (DOE/EIS/SA-171)

TO: Mrs. Dorie Welch
Fish and Wildlife Project Manager - KEWU-4

Proposed Action: Wallowa River/McDaniel Habitat Rehabilitation

Project No: 1992-026-01

Watershed Management Techniques or Actions Addressed Under This Supplement Analysis (See App. A of the Watershed Management Program EIS): 1.1 Modeling the effects of river channelization; 1.2 Prohibit further channelization; 1.3 Restoration of channelized river and stream reaches; 1.4 Pre-implementation evaluation on proposed enhancements; 1.5 Install grade control structures; 1.6 Install large woody debris structures; 1.7 Install other habitat complexity structures; 1.8 Bank protection through vegetation management; 1.9 Structural bank protection using bioengineering methods; 1.10 Structural bank protection using engineered structures; 2.1 Maintain healthy riparian plant communities; 2.2 Creation of wetlands to provide near-channel habitat and store water for later use; 6.10 Build fencing to limit livestock access.

Location: Near Lostine, Oregon on the Wallowa River near river mile 32, Wallowa County.

Proposed by: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) and Wallowa Resources

Description of the Proposed Action: The Bonneville Power Administration is proposing to fund a fish habitat rehabilitation project on the Wallowa River, a tributary to the Grande Ronde River, in Wallowa County, Oregon with Wallowa Resources, and in collaboration with the Landowner, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW), Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), and the Grande Ronde Model Watershed Program (GRMWP). The goals of this project include: enhance instream habitat for anadromous and resident aquatic species, rehabilitate and enhance meadow/riparian hydrology and wetland habitat along the Wallowa River, improve water quality, and establish conservation easements with the landowner. Project goals will be accomplished by:

- Construction of approximately 2,550 feet of new channel for the Wallowa River;
- Installation of rock cross-vane grade control structures and rootwad revetments/large wood in the new channel;
- Fish trap and haul from Wallowa River reach planned for abandonment (approximately 1,800 feet);
- Diversion of the Wallowa River from its current channelized reach into the new channel;
- Reclamation of the existing channelized river reach and associated floodplain;
- Construction and/or repair of boundary fences; and
- Revegetation activities involving seeding, installation of coir/sedge mats and tree, shrub, and sedge/rush planting.

Analysis: The NEPA compliance checklist for this project was completed by Coby Menton with the GRMWP and Nils Christoffersen with Wallowa Resources (21 July 2004) and meets the standards and guidelines for the Watershed Management Program Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Record of Decision (ROD).

The Endangered Species Act (ESA) listed species that may occur in the general vicinity of the project area are: Canada lynx (threatened), Bald eagle (threatened), Snake River Basin steelhead (threatened), Snake River spring/summer/fall chinook salmon (threatened), bull trout (threatened), McFarlane's four o'clock (threatened), and Spalding's campion/catchfly (threatened). BPA initiated ESA Section 7 consultation on the habitat rehabilitation project, including construction of .5 miles of new river channel. (Biological Assessment submitted to NOAA and USFWS on June 29, 2004). BPA and the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR) determined the proposed project would have no effect on gray wolf, Canada lynx, and Macfarlane's four o'clock.

There are seven known populations of Spalding's campion in Wallowa County. On July 20, 2004, an on-site survey was conducted for the presence of Spalding's campion. The survey team found no evidence of the plant and determined the habitat wetter than what is optimal for the plant and therefore, unsuitable habitat. BPA and CTUIR determined the proposed project would have no effect on Spalding's campion. See attached Spalding's campion project site survey report. BPA determined that the proposed project may affect, and is not likely to adversely affect bald eagle. BPA determined that the proposed project may affect, and is likely to adversely affect bull trout, Snake River spring Chinook salmon, summer steelhead, and their associated essential fish habitats. See attached: ESA Section 7(d) Compliance for Fall 2004 activities. A Biological Opinion (BO) is anticipated in mid-November from both U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and NOAA Fisheries.

In compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, Kevin Cannell, Tribal Archaeologist with the Nez Perce Tribe, completed an on-site cultural resources survey of the proposed project area in May 2004. No cultural materials were observed and the site was determined to have "an extremely low probability" for presense of cultural materials due to the nature of the landform. On July 13, 2004, Dennis Griffin, OR State Historic Preservation Officer concurred (See attached SHPO concurrence memo). In the unlikely event that archaeological material is discovered as part of this project, an archaeologist should be notified immediately and work halted in the vicinity of the finds until they can be inspected and assessed.

Standard water quality protection procedures and Best Management Practices will be followed during the implementation of the Wallowa River/McDaniel Habitat Restoration Project. No construction is authorized to begin until the proponent has obtained all applicable local, state, and federal permits and approvals including water right modifications.

Fall 2004 activities may commence (see attached ESA Section 7(d) compliance). However, no in-stream activities scheduled for Spring or Summer 2005 may begin until Biological Opinions are issued and ESA Section 7 compliance is granted by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and NOAA Fisheries. Biological Opinions are expected mid-November 2004.

Public Involvement has occurred as part of the Wallowa River/McDaniel Habitat Rehabilitation project. The project has been a collaborative effort between the Doug McDaniel, the landowner, and BPA, Wallowa Resources, the Grande Ronde Model Watershed Program, ODFW, CTUIR, the Nez Perce Tribe, and NRCS. This project has been reviewed at public meetings held by GRMWP and Wallowa Resources. Meetings were open to public comment and advertised both in the local newspapers and on the radio. Additionally, the project is posted in the GRMWP database, which is accessible to the public.

Findings: The project is generally consistent with Section 7.6A.2, 7.6B.3, & 7.8E.1, of the Northwest Power Planning Council's Fish and Wildlife Program. This Supplement Analysis finds 1) that the proposed actions are substantially consistent with the Watershed Management Program EIS (DOE/EIS-0265) and ROD, and, 2) that there are no new circumstances or information relevant to environmental concerns and bearing on the proposed actions or their impacts. Therefore, no further NEPA documentation is required.

/s/ Kelly Mason

Kelly Mason

Environmental Specialist

CONCUR:

/s/ Thomas C. McKinney

Thomas C. McKinney

NEPA Compliance Officer

DATE: August 11, 2004

Attachments:

NEPA Compliance Checklist

OR SHPO Concurrence letter

ESA Section 7(d) Compliance Memo to Official File

Botanist site survey findings for Spalding's campion

cc: (with attachments)

Mr. Nils Cristoffersen – Wallowa Resources

Mr. Vance McGowen – ODFW

Mr. Allen Childs – CTUIR

Mr. Coby Menton – GRMWP